



**Employer Connection  
helps identify mobility  
& telework solutions for  
your employee's needs**



**EMPLOYER CONNECTION**  
**BEYOND THE BUS**

A PROGRAM OF  
**TRANSIT**

## **FREDERICK COUNTY EMPLOYER CONNECTION PROGRAM**

Employer Connection is an entirely complimentary program for Frederick County employers interested in improving their employees' trips to the office (or home office). Whether your employees are currently driving to work, taking the bus, or working from home, the program is a resource you can tap into to support your staff in a way that aligns with your employee's needs and company goals.

Since we know all companies and their employee's needs are not the same, the employer connection team can connect your company to customized resources and provide assistance that will best serve your employees.

### **HOW THE EMPLOYER CONNECTION TEAM CAN HELP:**

- Provide resources for getting your staff back to the office safely and efficiently
- Assist in establishing a formalized telework program, fine-tune your existing telework program, help to address telework struggles your company may be facing, and more
- Provide up-to-date transit and travel information
- Develop customized commute plans for individuals, including assistance with forming carpools and vanpools, identifying which bus routes are available, and more

## **Employer & Employee Benefits**

As an employer, you are able to offer pre-tax deductions, a direct employee benefit, following the IRS Code 132(f) Commuter Tax Benefit. The IRS currently allows employers to provide up to \$265 / month to staff as a tax-free benefit for transit/vanpool costs. Not only do pre-tax benefits greatly impact your employee's trip to work, but providing pre-tax benefits can also have considerable tax advantages for your company.

## **Commuter Tax Credit**

Maryland employers may claim a tax credit for a portion of the eligible costs of providing commuter benefits to participating employees. The tax credit is 50% of the cost of providing the commuter benefits up to a maximum of \$100 per month for each employee. The tax credit can be taken against the state personal income tax, corporate income tax, or the insurance premium tax.

Transit, vanpool-related costs, Guaranteed Ride Home, and parking "cash-out" are all eligible commuter expenses.

Visit [OneStop.MD.Gov](https://onestop.md.gov) to apply for pre-tax benefits or contact the Employer Connection team to learn more.



## Vanpool Incentive Program

The Vanpool Incentive Program is designed to encourage new vanpool formations within Frederick County. The incentive program offers a financial subsidy funding unoccupied seats in the vanpool during the vanpool's first year of operation.

### Vanpool Options

**OWNER-OPERATED VANS** - an individual leases or purchases a van and operates the van independently. Riders generally meet at a central location and pay the owner a set monthly fee.

**THIRD-PARTY VANS** - a vanpool "vendor" leases the vanpool vehicle for a monthly fee that includes the vehicle operating cost, insurance, and maintenance. The vendor can contract directly with 1 or more employees. The monthly lease fee is paid by the group of users.

**EMPLOYER-PROVIDED VANS** - the employer (or a group of employers) buys or leases vans for employees' commute use. The employer organizes the vanpool riders and insures and maintains the vehicles. The employer may charge a fee to ride in the van or subsidize the service.

TransIT will assist in the recruitment of new riders. Additional eligibility, amongst other, is as follows:

Verification Process for the Vanpool Incentive Program

- Proof of leasing agreement with van rental company
- Verification that vanpool was nonexistent prior to subsidy
- Operated on a not-for-profit basis
- Proof of Vehicle registration
- Verification of good driving records for principle and alternative drivers

Learn more at [FrederickCountyMD.gov/210/Vanpools](https://FrederickCountyMD.gov/210/Vanpools) or reach out to the Employer Connection team for tips on starting or joining a vanpool.

## BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH THE EMPLOYER CONNECTION PROGRAM



### Reduce Stress & Absenteeism

Instead of sitting in hours of traffic, providing alternative modes of travel such as taking the bus or carpooling to work provide employees with less stressful commutes, making for a more productive day.



### Boost Morale & Productivity

By offering commute alternatives like telework and compressed work-weeks, employees are offered more flexibility, added time that would otherwise be spent commuting, and a more attainable work-life balance.



### Increase Retention

Many studies have shown that employees that are offered flexibility, travel choices, and work-life balance support from their employer are more likely to maintain their employment at their workplace.

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If you have any questions or are interested in working with the Employer Connection team, email [support@FrederickCountyEC.com](mailto:support@FrederickCountyEC.com) or visit [FrederickCountyMD.Gov/EmployerConnection](https://FrederickCountyMD.Gov/EmployerConnection)